The Expectation of Advent

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Phil.1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope.

INTRO. Two words in the Bible deserve our most careful study and consideration-Hope and Expectation.

For generations the Hebrew people looked for the coming of the Messiah. Their hope rose and fell with the centuries.

All the prophecies and precious promises of God are linked with the hopes and expectations of His people.

Not only did God thus reveal Himself, but the very darkness in which people lived, thru hope and expectancy revealed a light shining that promised the dawn of a better day. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light" is the way the prophet Isaiah interpreted the experience of his people. And this has been the common experience of the whole human race. Hope and expectation have been and still are essential factors of progress and success.

Many poets have sung of the failure of expectations and of the futility of our hoping. Shakespere:" Oft expectation fails; and most oft there, where most it promises."

But there is an expectation and a hope that has never failed- it is linked with the coming of the Messiah and is realized thru faith in Christ.

TEXT-Phil.1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope.

"O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by:
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years

2. "Are met in Thee tonite."

Text: Phil. 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope.

Paul's expectation was that Christ would be magnified in him that the world of darkness might be dispelled with the heaven's shining light.

Dare we to ask, "What is the expectation of your life and mine? What do we contemplate and what are we sure of, today?

As we look out into the world we see a moving picture of all sorts of people pressing forward, struggling, striving, some attaining a measure of success, the majority falling, failing- and we wonder what it is all about, whither are we bound and shall we ever get there?

For us Xns there should be only one answer- that Christ may be magnified, that He may be made acceptable as Savior of all mankind.

For what purpose did God reveal Himself? Why did Christ come? Of what use is the Bible? For what was the Church founded? Upon what do all the promises of God converge?

The answer is found in this same epistle of Paul's from which we have taken our text: "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." To this end we should be doing all our Xn thinking, planning, praying an working.

II. We Cns often fail because we do not expect God to help us.

~~what writer often said that we get out of life~~

3. It is often said that we get out of life what we put into it. Another way of saying the same thing is,"We get from life what we wxpext from it." "According to your faith be it unto you." "According to your expectations be it unto you."

The poor woman in distress who went to a friend for help. "Why, said her friend," I sent you money yesterday in a letter."

"Dear, dear, said the poor woman,"that must be the letter I put behind the looking glass."

And just so, many people put God's letters of help behind the looking glass.

A poet and an artist once together examined a famous painting represening the healing of the two blind men of Jericho.

The artist asked,"What seems to you the most remarkable thing in this painting?"

The poet replied,"Eberything in the lainting is excellently given, the form of Christ, the grouping of the individuals, the expression in the faces of the leading characters, stc."

But the artist seemed to find the most significent touch elsewhere. Pointing to the steps of a house in the corner of the pictnre he asked,"Do you see that discarded cane lying there?"

"Yes, but what does that signify?"

"Why, my friend, on those steps the blind man sat with the cane in his hand, but when he heard Christ come he was so sure that he would be healed that he let his cane lie there, since he would need it no more, and hastened to the Lord as if he could already see."

Too often we hold on to the crutches and canes of our own self-help instead of going to the Savior, the Helper Divine!

Some will remember the verse I stumbled over a few weeks ago-"Therefore let us also, seeing we are compssed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run, with patience, the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and perfector of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before hi him, endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

The very Spirit of Christ is one of expectancy. In his consciousness of being the Messiah, he expects to redeem the world from sin In trusting his disciples to carroy on after his departure and in commissioning them to go into all the world, Jesus expected his Gospel to be made known to all mankind.

In his parables of the growth of the K.G., it is evident that Christ expected the kingdom to keep on growing until it reaches its triumphant rule in the hearts and lives of all peoples of earth

And in his position, described to us as sitting down at the right hand of God, our risen living Lord is expecting all the nations to come to Him and become a part of the Kingdom of God.

God is constantly & unfailingly expecting us
We must be in expectancy of Him

And tho that great day seems far off, our Xn hearts assert thatwhen there is deepest night over nations, a day is coming, the day of the Lord is at hand; that a dawn is coming, not the last day nor the final dawn, but the uprising of Christ in light, deliverance, knowledge and love.

Let me put a strong note of expectancy in our Xmas Eli year!

5) O Holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend on us, we pray;
Cast out our sin & enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Xmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide in us,
Our Lord, Immanuel.